

REMARKS

This Response is in reply to the Office Action dated January 2, 2003, Applicant has amended claims 1, 10, 13 and 17 as discussed in an interview with Ella Colbert, John Sumner, and Andrea Jacobson on January 25, 2003. For the reasons discussed during the interview and more fully outlined below, Applicant respectfully submits that pending claims as amended 1-22 are in condition for allowance and respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of all rejections.

INTERVIEW SUMARY AND RESPONSE

As discussed in the interview on January 25, 2003, claims 1, 10, 13 and 17 have been amended as shown on the attached pages as titled "Version with Markings to Show Changes Made."

It is respectfully noted that U.S. Patent No. 5,786,817 to *Sakano et al*, in column 2, line 57, "The user makes an entry in an area....which is superposed on the display letters "Retention Period." As noted at column 2 beginning at line 60 "The display unit for establishing a retention period." Accordingly under the teachings of Sakano, the recipient establishes a retention period, and act which teaches away from the claimed invention is now amended to retaining an electronic record for a "pre-determined" retention policy of an organization" so as to maintain the record for a minimum time period based on the pre-determined retention policy." Line 10 of claim 1(herein after Sakano), line of claim 13, line 17 of claim 17.

Therefore Sakano teaches away from the now amended claims which require retention of records in compliance with a pre-determined retention policy of an organization.

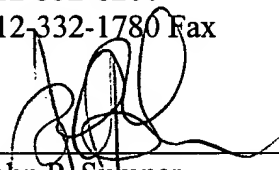
Application has been amended claim 10 as suggested by the examiner to eliminate the words "sender or" in line 2 of claim 10.

It is respectfully submitted that Claims 1-22 as now amended are in condition for allowance. A notice for allowance is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

Please make the following changes to claims 1, 10, 13 and 17.

1. [Fourth Amendment] In a distributed computing environment, a method for managing an electronic record for compliance with a pre-determined retention policy of an organization, the method comprising the steps of:

creating an electronic tag that uniquely identifies the electronic record, the tag having at least one field for characterizing the record;

storing the at least one electronic tag in a central [depository] repository;

sending the electronic record to a recipient; and

wherein:

at least one of the steps of creating and storing ensure maintenance of the characterized record for a minimum time period based on the pre-determined retention policy; and

the recipient will be unable to delete the record from the central repository prior to the end of the minimum time period established by the predetermined retention policy.

10. [Twice Amended] The method of claim 8, wherein the index code identifies the contents of the electronic record and the [sender or] recipient of the electronic record.

13. [Fourth Amendment] In a distributed computing environment, an apparatus for managing an electronic record for compliance with a pre-determined retention policy of an organization, the apparatus comprising:

a computer system comprising at least one processor and at least one memory, the computer system being adapted and arranged for:

creating an electronic tag that uniquely identifies the electronic record, the tag having at least one field for characterizing the record;

storing the at least one electronic tag in a central [depository] repository;

sending the electronic record to a recipient; and

wherein:

at least one of the steps of creating and storing ensure maintenance of the characterized record for a minimum time period based on the pre-determined retention policy; and

the recipient will be unable to delete the record from the central repository prior to the end of the minimum time period established by the pre-determined retention policy.

17. [Fourth Amendment] In a distributed computing environment, an article of manufacture for managing an electronic record for compliance with a pre-determined retention policy of an organization, the article of manufacture comprising a computer-readable storage medium having a computer program embodied therein that causes the computer network to perform the steps of:

creating an electronic tag that identifies the electronic record, the tag having at least one field for characterizing the record;

storing the at least one electronic tag in a central repository;

sending the electronic record to a recipient; and

wherein:

at least one of the steps of creating and storing ensure maintenance of the characterized record for a minimum time period based on the pre-determined retention policy; and

the recipient will be unable to delete the record from the central [depository] repository prior to the end of the minimum time period established by the pre-determined retention policy.